

TEASER

1 EXT. EAST TEXAS WOODS - NIGHT

Sounds of nocturnal nightlife in the woods, far away from the bustle of a town. A campfire crackles nearby. **Two women chant 2 times:**

WOMEN

Te invoco a profundus inferni.
Daemon, esto subjecto voluntati
meae.

While they're chanting, the wind blows the pages of a book. Distant, faint whispers fill the night, getting more insistent with each repetition of the spell.

The women both stop chanting and the whispers and the wind stop.

AGATHA

What now?

Janice doesn't respond.

AGATHA (CONT'D)

Janice!

JANICE

What? Oh, sorry. I was just thinking about that Mc-whatever-guy blowing up that building in Oklahoma City the other day. How could anyone be that evil? And you literally want to summon a demon using a spell from some old book? It just seems like a bad--

AGATHA

(exasperated)

Janice, you need to take a chill pill.

(under breath)

Jesus.

(pause)

What does it say we do next?

JANICE

Um. Okay. I guess we wait. It doesn't really say how long it's gonna be before...the demon...or whatever shows up.

AGATHA
 (mocking)
 You really are scared, aren't you?

JANICE
 Yeah. This seemed kind of fun at first, but now I just have a really bad feeling. What if we go kill a bunch of people too, Agatha?

AGATHA
 Jan! McVeigh was just a shitty dude. People suck. They don't need to be possessed to do horri--

Janice lets out a **keening moan of pain**.

JANICE
 (with a grimace)
 The sigil on my hand. It...it burns. Like, really burns.

Sounds of multiple voices faintly whispering surround the women.

JANICE (CONT'D)
 Agatha? Do you hear that?
 (pause)
 Agatha?

Agatha is silent at first, then begins **choking, gagging, and coughing**.

JANICE (CONT'D)
 Agatha!
 (pause)
 Wha...what's wrong with your eyes?

Janice lets out a **desperate sob**.

JANICE (CONT'D)
 Th..they're bleeding. Oh my g--

AGATHA
 (in multiple, unnaturally deep voices, with her own voice most prominent)
 It's opening.

JANICE
 (through tears)
 What?

JANICE (CONT'D)

(alarmed)

What are you doing? This isn't
funny, Agatha! Put the knife down!

Janice scrambles, trying to get up and away from Agatha,
grunting and shuffling.

JANICE (CONT'D)

Agatha! No! Agatha, stop! What are
you--

More struggling between the women, then the slice of a knife
cuts through Janice's flesh. She begins **choking and gurgling**
on her own blood, then thumps to the ground, silent.

AGATHA

(continuing multiple
voices)

It's opening.

A ghostly exhalation of satisfaction blows the campfire out.

Another slice of the knife against flesh as Agatha slits her
own throat. She, too, **chokes and gurgles** on her blood and
falls to the ground, silent.

The sound of something raspy drinking deeply fills the night.
The pages of the book turn in rhythm with the gulps. The
ground begins to shake, slight at first, but quickly becomes
a violent earthquake. The earth splits, and whispers emerge
from the depths, giddy and malevolent.

ACT ONE

2 EXT. GUNNAWAY CEMETERY - DAY

Cicadas and birds sing. A soft wind blows tall grass.

A woman is **panting**, trudging with heavy footsteps through the overgrown landscape.

BECKY
(muttering)
Where is this stupid grave?

Becky continues to walk, her steps staggered.

BECKY (CONT'D)
(sing songy, but angry)
Roooooobert Mooooooore. Come out,
come out, wherever you are.
(pause)
It's too damn hot for this shit.

Becky stops abruptly.

BECKY (CONT'D)
Aunt Agatha! Might as well take a
break with family, right?

Determined footsteps, then sitting or crouching. Becky opens her water bottle and takes a swig.

BECKY (CONT'D)
Hey, Aunt Agatha.
(pause)
Ooo, what's this? I didn't know
cemeteries had guestbooks.

We hear her thumbing through the pages of a book.

BECKY (CONT'D)
Oh hell yeah! It's a spell book.
(pause)
"To capture the heart of the one
you love, gather candles, roses,
and citrus."

Becky closes the book.

BECKY (CONT'D)
Well I guess this trip wasn't a
total bust. I get Mama Cherrie's
dirt and an antique spell book.

Becky grabs a trowel from her bag and digs dirt from the grave. She unscrews a mason jar, dropping the dirt inside. Each time the trowel pierces the ground, she punctuates it with each word in a sentence:

BECKY (CONT'D)

It's not like...you were a pedophile...
or murderer...or anything.

(stops digging, then a bit
sad)

I wish you'd lived long enough for
me to meet you, Aunt Agatha. I hate
that I don't know anything about
you at all.

Becky screws the lid back on.

BECKY (CONT'D)

Thanks, Aunt Agatha. For the book...
and the dirt.

Excited whispers that mirror the teaser emanate from the book in Becky's bag, but she's oblivious as she trudges out of the cemetery.

3

INT. MAMA CHERRIE'S FLORAL SHOP - DAY

A screen door creaks open, ringing a bell, then bangs shut in the middle distance. Mama Cherrie is alone, **humming** while she grinds some plants into powder using a mortar and pestle.

MAMA CHERRIE

(stops humming on door
slam)

Becky, what did I tell you about
slamming my goddamn door?

BECKY

(insincere, from the front
room)

Sorry.

MAMA CHERRIE

(under her breath)

Lord, why is this little white girl
the only person in this whole town
willing to carry on this legacy?

The grinding resumes, and footsteps come toward us as Becky approaches Mama Cherrie.

BECKY

I got that dirt you asked for from
the graveyard.

MAMA CHERRIE

And you got it off Rob—

BECKY

Robert Moore's grave, yes ma'am.

MAMA CHERRIE

You absolutely sure? Don't lie to
me, girl. You know I'll know.

BECKY

(scoffs)

Yes. I'm sure.

MAMA CHERRIE

(skeptical)

Alright, then. Good.

Cherrie brushes her hands together to get the powder off of
them, while saying:

MAMA CHERRIE (CONT'D)

And you left seven cents exactly? A
nick—

BECKY

(prideful)

A nickel and two pennies.

MAMA CHERRIE

Alright then girl. Since you know
so much, tell me what else we need
to do to work this root.

The screen door creaks open, ringing the bell, again from
middle distance, again slamming.

Mama Cherrie scoffs. She begins walking toward the door,
stutter-steeping when she hears:

SHERIFF BOB

(from the other side of
the shop)

Hello?

Cherrie's footsteps resume, with Becky's joining in.

MAMA CHERRIE

(whispering to Becky)

Good Lord.

(MORE)

MAMA CHERRIE (CONT'D)

This is the third time this week. I told you he got it out for me. See if you can get him out our hair so I can be done with him for good.

Cherrie clears her throat as she approaches Sheriff Bob.

MAMA CHERRIE (CONT'D)

Good afternoon,
(with derision)
Sheriff. Couldn't stay away, huh?

SHERIFF BOB

(distracted)
Always work to be done.
(focused)
Don't suppose you're gonna let me in the back this time?

MAMA CHERRIE

(with sass)
Don't suppose you got a warrant this time?

SHERIFF BOB

Not yet, but I don't see what the big deal is long as you're followin' the law.

MAMA CHERRIE

(Sighs)
Ain't you tired of chasing your tail? We both know you're only on my ass all the time because my mama cursed your daddy for being a racist prick.

BECKY

(quickly, yet sweetly)
Hey there, Sheriff Daugherty.

SHERIFF BOB

(lecherous)
Hello, Becky. How are you this fine afternoon?

MAMA CHERRIE

Bob, we got work—

BECKY

I'm fine, sir. Just finished potting this here plant.

SHERIFF BOB

Well, it's a beauty. Wish I had some nice lady to give something like that to.

(MORE)

SHERIFF BOB (CONT'D)
 Cherrie payin' you proper, right?
 Paying taxes and all that?

MAMA CHERRIE
 Look here—

BECKY
 Well, I'm just thankful to
 learn so much from her. I
 want to have my own floral
 shop one day. Can you believe
 she's teaching me all this
 free of charge?
 (doesn't wait for a
 response; drops her voice
 to a more sultry pitch;
 the wood floor creaks
 underfoot as she leans
 forward)
 Listen, Sheriff, can you do
 me a favor?

SHERIFF BOB
 Anything for you, darlin'.

BECKY
 I was just on the road from
 Meltonville, and saw at least three
 people going double the speed limit
 on that highway. Now, you know my
 mama died 'cause of a speeder, and
 all I can think about is some other
 little girl crying herself to sleep
 because someone else couldn't
 follow the law.

Becky **sniffles** delicately, then she **clears her throat** before
 continuing:

BECKY (CONT'D)
 Maybe you can go patrol that
 stretch of highway? It sure would
 set my mind at ease.

Becky's crying full-on, now.

SHERIFF BOB
 (uncomfortable)
 Well, um, I think that's a great
 idea. I can do that.

BECKY
 Oh, please don't hug me. That'll
 really get me crying! But I...
 appreciate the gesture?

Mama Cherrie **clears her throat**.

SHERIFF BOB

Well, uh...we'll see you here in a bit, Becky.

Heavy footsteps recede as Sheriff Bob walks to the door. The screen door creaks open, ringing the bell, then slams shut.

MAMA CHERRIE

Nobody around here knows how to close a goddamn door?

Mama Cherrie takes a deep breath to recenter herself.

MAMA CHERRIE (CONT'D)

Good girl.

(pause)

Did your mama really die on that road?

BECKY

Nah. It was cancer. 'Bout 5 years ago.

Mama Cherrie scoffs.

MAMA CHERRIE

(concerned)

You're a damn good actress.

BECKY

Thank—

MAMA CHERRIE

Don't ruin it by talking. Let's start with the shop—

BECKY

I already took care of it. Red brick dust at the doors and windows, and I buried the railroad spikes at the four corners of the property.

MAMA CHERRIE

'Bout time you took some initiative. Let's go on and head over to ole nosy ass Bob's house so I don't have to see his ugly mug no more. You got the work together for the banishing?

BECKY

Yes'm. Goofer dust, white mustard seed and his nail clippings all in the jar.

(mumbles)

I should have gotten hazard pay for that.

4 INT. AUGUST'S BAR - DAY

Glasses clink and patrons are chatting happily in AUGUST'S bar.

KELLY

'ey August. One more shot of Jim over here.

AUGUST

(chuckles, but only to soften the blow)

You can't even hold your glass steady.

KELLY

Whaddya mean? You know I got these tremors even when I'm sober. Besides, I don't got anywhere else to be.

AUGUST

Sorry to hear that, Kelly. Anything I can do?

KELLY

(darkly)

You can get me another drink.

The door opens and a bell rings, announcing another patron entering the bar.

AUGUST

Hey, Rhonda!

RHONDA

Hey, August!

High-heeled steps on a wooden floor.

AUGUST

Where's Ethan?

RHONDA

Oh, he's over at Gilly's. We ordered some burgers to go. Got a long night of running lines for his school play tomorrow.

AUGUST

Can't believe he's already in 6th grade.

RHONDA

I know. Time sure flies. I remember when you came to the hospital to meet him. You were there before my dad.

AUGUST

I was, wasn't I? I forgot all about that.

(pause)

You want a couple ginger ales to go?

RHONDA

You know it! And how 'bout a Frizzled Hen while I wait for Ethan? His whole DnD crew is over there and he basically threw me out.

August chuckles, and begins mixing Rhonda's drink.

AUGUST

Sounds like our Ethan.

KELLY

(from the distance)

August! Where's that drink!?

AUGUST

Excuse me, Rhonda.

(louder)

Some people don't have any manners.

KELLY

Fuck you, August.

AUGUST

Language, Kelly. You know we keep it PG-13 in here.

RHONDA

(whispers)

Take it easy on him, August.

(MORE)

RHONDA (CONT'D)

I heard he got fired last week. And you know he's been living on the street since Jesus was born. Besides, he's a good guy with a good heart...even if he is a little strange.

AUGUST

Fine, fine. I can see why Jackson loved you so much. And Ethan...oh, thank God for him. It's almost like we never lost him.

August clears his throat. Rhonda gets quiet. August adds another shot to Rhonda's drink.

RHONDA

(choked up)

Yeah. He basically copy/pasted his daddy's whole personality and looks. You'd never guess he's mine. Sometimes I...I wonder if it should have been me.

AUGUST

No. And you know Jackson would agree with me, especially after he saw what his sister went through. There's something about mama. Now, enjoy your Frizzled Hen, milady.

(pause, fading)

And here's another, Kelly. Last one.

KELLY

Much obliged.

ACT TWO

5 EXT. SHERIFF BOB'S HOUSE — FRONT YARD - DAY

Sounds of summer in East Texas: cicadas, birds, a slight breeze. A car passes by on a bumpy, country road.

BECKY

Do we have to bury it under the porch? There's probably rats and snakes under there just wait—

MAMA CHERRIE

You ain't gotta do shit. If you're just gon' complain, you can stay right here. If you wanna learn something, act like you got a spine and come up under here with me.

BECKY

(shakily)
Okay.

Becky grunts and lets go a high-pitched keening, but manages to get under the porch without incident.

MAMA CHERRIE

This oughta do it. Let's dig here. He'll definitely have to walk over this part of the porch to get in his front door. You remember why he has to walk over it?

Sounds of Mama Cherrie using a small trowel to dig a hole.

BECKY

Yes, ma'am. For the root to work, he's gotta come in contact with it as often as possible. The more he's close to it, the more powerful it'll be.

MAMA CHERRIE

Good girl. You might be able to learn this craft after all. Gotta say, I didn't think you'd make a good apprentice, but when it comes down to it, you get the job done...
(under her breath)
after I nag you a bit.

Mama Cherrie continues to dig.

MAMA CHERRIE (CONT'D)

We don't need it too deep. Just enough to pour this in and cover it up.

BECKY

We're not gonna put the whole jar in there like we did with the protection one for JoAnn?

MAMA CHERRIE

Nah. We could. It would still work just fine, but I like pouring banishing work in the dirt and mixing it in. Harder to get rid of that way. Bob knows about these ways and if he found the jar, he'd destroy it and we'd be back at square one.

(pause while she finishes digging)

Okay, that's good. Hand it here.

Mama Cherrie grunts with effort to open the jar.

MAMA CHERRIE (CONT'D)

Damn arthritis. You do it.

(pause, then under her breath)

You think the Lord would see fit for me to be able to use my damn hands given what's at stake in this town.

Becky opens the jar while Cherrie talks.

MAMA CHERRIE (CONT'D)

Now dump it all in the hole.

Becky shakes the contents into the hole. A deep rumbling comes from the earth.

MAMA CHERRIE (CONT'D)

What in the hell?

BECKY

Mama Cherrie, it's okay!
It's just an earthquake! I went through plenty of these when I was in California! We just need to get out from under the porch!

Frantic scratching and digging as the earthquake continues.

MAMA CHERRIE

You stupid child! What did you do?

BECKY

Come on! We gotta go! We need to get out from under this porch. Why are you still digging?

MAMA CHERRIE

This ain't some quake! There's not a fault line for hundreds of miles.

(pause, then angry and accusatory)

Where?

A strong wind blows through. Objects fall and break above them on the wooden porch. Glass bottles clink together, some fall from trees and shatter. Wind chimes clank together violently.

MAMA CHERRIE (CONT'D)

Where the hell did you get that dirt from? Which grave?!

Mama Cherrie tightens her grip on **Becky**, making her yelp in pain, but Becky keeps fighting.

BECKY

What do you mean? Let go of me!

MAMA CHERRIE

(snarling)

You lazy brat. Where'd you get the dirt? Ain't no way you got this off Moore's plot.

BECKY

(whining)

I dunno.

Becky whimpers.

MAMA CHERRIE

Tell me!

BECKY

You're hurting me!

Mama Cherrie yanks Becky's arm, **making her squeal.**

BECKY (CONT'D)

My aunt!

MAMA CHERRIE

Your aunt? Who's your aunt?

The wind picks up until it roars like a train. Wind chimes clank together violently, somehow still striking a tune that sounds like a funeral march. In the distance, trees crack. The old house creaks; floorboards above them get ripped away in the tornado, nails and all.

MAMA CHERRIE (CONT'D)

(yelling)

This is what happens when you play with stuff you don't know nothing about. Who. Is. Your. Aunt?

BECKY

A-Agatha. Agatha Williams. It doesn't matter! I still left the payment.

Mama Cherrie yells in rage, then slaps Becky. Becky squeaks.

MAMA CHERRIE

You gotta be fucking kidding me. You are somehow even stupider than I thought. Doesn't matter, my ass.

Mama Cherrie grabs hold of Becky again, dragging her from under the porch, **making Becky yelp.**

MAMA CHERRIE (CONT'D)

You're coming with me to fix this. Now.

6 INT./EXT. AUGUST'S BAR - DAY

A loud rumbling settles, then **heavy breathing and groaning as August** gets up from crouching.

AUGUST

Everybody okay?

RHONDA

(frantic)
Ethan! Ethan! Oh, my god.
Ethan!

Stunned murmuring, and Rhonda's heels pounding the floor as she runs to the door, August's heavy steps right behind her.

AUGUST (CONT'D)

Ethan! No, no, no. God, no.

The door opens suddenly, sounding the bell. August and Rhonda continue outside. Rhonda keeps running, glass crunching beneath her feet, while August pauses.

AUGUST (CONT'D)
 (to himself)
 The courthouse, general store,
 Gilly's...gone. But my bar...the
 floral shop...
 (realization)
 Oh God. Oh no. Not again.

In the distance, **Rhonda is screaming Ethan's name**. August trots to catch up, glass crunching under his feet. The street is eerily silent, with just stunned shuffling through the town and Rhonda's pleas.

AUGUST (CONT'D)
 Come on! Let's get this cleared
 out! You--start there.

August starts tossing heavy bricks and debris aside. Others join in, **breathing heavily, groaning with the effort**, but silent in their concern.

AUGUST (CONT'D)
 (yelling)
 Has anyone called 911?

There's no response, and no break in clearing debris.

AUGUST (CONT'D)
 I'll call. Y'all keep at it.

Glass crunches underfoot. Sounds of debris being cleared fades as August walks away to make the call. He gets a busy signal. Tries a second time, still busy. **August grumbles**, then tries a 10-digit number. This time, a line rings.

GEMMA (V.O.)
 Gunnaway Emergency. How may I help
 you?

AUGUST
 (with urgency)
 Gemma, I dunno if y'all felt it,
 but there was an earthquake
 downtown that took out most of the
 buildings...lot of people hurt, lot
 more probably dead. We need you
 down here with everything and
 everyone you've got.

GEMMA
 Oh my gosh! Are you okay? Is mom?

AUGUST

I'm fine, but we can't find your
mom or Ethan.

August shuffles his feet, digging the toe of his boot into
the ground to crush some glass into a powder.

GEMMA

Wait, Ethan is down there?

August continues with a quieter voice. Tears fill his eyes,
and he works to keep his voice even.

AUGUST

Yeah, he was over at Gilly's.

GEMMA

(sniffles)

Okay. I'll see what we can do. What
about Aunt Rhonda? She okay?

AUGUST

She's with me, but pretty torn up.

GEMMA (O.S)

I'm gonna get some folks down there
and I'm on my way.

Gemma can't hold it together any more and **breaks down.**

GEMMA (CONT'D)

Find them, Pops. We can't lose
them. Not after Uncle Jackson.

AUGUST

I will, Gem.

7 EXT. SHERIFF BOB'S HOUSE — FRONT YARD — DAY

Branches are snapping. **Mama Cherrie and Becky are running and
breathing heavily.**

MAMA CHERRIE

I can't believe this shit. We need
to get to my car. Now!

A branch whizzes past, very close by.

MAMA CHERRIE (CONT'D)

Shit. Get behind this tractor
before we get impaled by one of
these branches.

The women stop running.

BECKY

Trees are probably still falling down because of the earthquake.

MAMA CHERRIE

Girl, when have you ever seen an earthquake spawn a tornado?

BECKY

I--So what is it?

MAMA CHERRIE

Becky, do you have any other hobbies besides asking stupid questions?

The wind finally dies down to a strong breeze with occasional gusts, and the rumbling stops. Mama Cherrie begins to walk away.

MAMA CHERRIE (CONT'D)

Come on. We gotta fix your fuck up.

BECKY

Wait. You think this is my fault?
Like, the earthquake?
And...tornado? The weather is my fault?

Mama Cherrie stops walking in the middle of Becky's sentence.

MAMA CHERRIE

(mocking)

You think this is my fault?

(normal)

Yes, it's your damn fault. I told you time and time again that graveyard dirt is very powerful and if you ain't careful, it can unleash some pretty dark shit.

BECKY

I'm--

A siren chirps nearby.

MAMA CHERRIE

Lord Jesus help me.

Sheriff Bob slams his car door.

SHERIFF BOB

What the hell are you doing on my property, Cherrie?

MAMA CHERRIE

Why are you here? A real sheriff would be in town right now, checking on his citizens after a disaster. But you're lazy and prefer to leave it all to Andre, don't you? Guess it makes sense you leaving everyone high and dry.

Footsteps approach as Becky comes to intervene.

BECKY

Sheriff, please, let us explain.

8 EXT. DOWNTOWN GUNNAWAY - DAY

Sounds of people clearing debris and crying fill the air. A pair of heavy boots approach, crunching debris and glass. August stops clearing debris.

AUGUST

Jesus Christ Andre, it's good to see you. We need all hands on deck here.

ANDRE

You okay, August? Your hands are bleeding.

AUGUST

Yeah, I'm as fine as I can be.

ANDRE

Lord Almighty, what a mess. Gemma just called. Ambulance and fire are on their way, but we can't get anyone to the county hospital--hell, we can't even reach the county hospital. The fucking bridges are gone altogether. And I can't get a call through to anywhere outside of town.

August remains silent, clearing debris like a machine. Andre joins in.

ANDRE (CONT'D)

I'm so sorry. I know your daughter works here. We'll find her.

AUGUST
It's alright. I'm more worried
about Ethan right now.

ANDRE
Ethan was in there?

August clears his throat.

AUGUST
Yeah.

Andre pats August a couple of times, hard, on the shoulder.

Rhonda's frantic footsteps as she approaches August and
Andre.

RHONDA
Andre! Andre! Ethan's in there.
Under there.

ANDRE
Okay, Rhonda. We'll find him.
Do you know if he was in the front
or back?

RHONDA
I--I don't know. Oh my god. I
don't--
(desperate sobs)

August pulls Rhonda into a hug, muffling her voice:

RHONDA (CONT'D)
(between sobs)
I shouldn't have ever left him.

AUGUST
This isn't on you, Rhonda. Okay?
Gemma and some other folks will be
here soon. We'll find him and take
care of him.
(pause)
Excuse me for just a minute. I'm
just gonna go grab a first aid kit.

August walks away from Andre and Rhonda, and dials his phone
as he walks back into the bar. The line begins to ring.

AUGUST (CONT'D)
Come on, Cherrie. Pick up.
(phone continues to ring)
Dammit, pick up. It's happening
again. And Ethan is gonna need you.

ACT THREE

9 EXT. SHERIFF BOB'S HOUSE — FRONT YARD - DAY

Cherrie's phone is ringing, but she ignores it.

SHERIFF BOB

Oh, I can't wait to hear why you're standing in my front yard. Do tell, Becky.

MAMA CHERRIE

Becky, get the green tote bag out my trunk.

SHERIFF BOB

No you don't, Becky. Stay right where you are.

MAMA CHERRIE

Trust me, Bob. You want her to get that bag.

SHERIFF BOB

And what makes you think I'd want something like that?

The trunk pops open, and a fabric bag rattles as Becky pulls it out.

BECKY

What's in here? I've never seen this stuff before.

MAMA CHERRIE

Inside, there's a ziplock bag. Get it out, 'cause we're going to need it.

The Sheriff snatches the tote away from her.

BECKY

What are you--

Rustling as Sheriff goes through contents of the bag.

SHERIFF BOB

Well, well. What do we have here?

Sheriff Bob dumps out its contents onto the ground.

SHERIFF BOB (CONT'D)
 Jackpot! I knew you were selling
 drugs!

A plastic baggie shakes.

MAMA CHERRIE
 Come on, now. Do you really think
 I'd be stupid enough to get a bag
 of drugs out of the trunk of my car
 in full view of law enforcement?
 What kinda fool do you take me for?

SHERIFF BOB
 Criminals aren't the sharpest bulbs
 in the box.

MAMA CHERRIE
 (under her breath)
 Dear God in heaven.

Sheriff Bob opens the bag and puts some of the contents on
 his gums.

MAMA CHERRIE (CONT'D)
 Don't put that in your mouth, Bo--

Sheriff Bob sputters.

MAMA CHERRIE (CONT'D)
 Robert Daugherty, that's not drugs.
 It's the ground up bones of
 animals.

The **sheriff spits, then starts to dry heave**. Becky scrambles
 to gather the contents, shoving them back in the bag before
 the sheriff blows chunks all over his lawn.

MAMA CHERRIE (CONT'D)
 Come on, Becky.

SHERIFF BOB
 I'm not done.
 (dry heaving)
 Come back here.

The women walk away, ignoring Bob.

SHERIFF BOB (CONT'D)
 I said stop.

The sheriff pulls his gun.

SHERIFF BOB (CONT'D)

I said, stop!

The woman stop at the sound of the pistol clearing his holster.

SHERIFF BOB (CONT'D)

Y'all just think you can do any damn thing you please, don't you? Well I'm the law around here and it's about time I got some answers. Why in the hell would you have a bag of...
 (gags)
 bag of...
 (gags)
 bone powder?

The women don't respond, nor do they move.

SHERIFF BOB (CONT'D)

And for that matter, how do I even know it's animal bones? For all I know, you coulda killed some folks and ground up their bones.

Sheriff Bob **starts heaving again.**

SHERIFF BOB (CONT'D)

Oh, god. I shouldn't...
 (gags)
 have said that.

MAMA CHERRIE

I can assure you that it is indeed animal bones. And seeing as how you got a gun pointed at me when I'm trying to save this godforsaken town, I guess I might as well tell you the whole truth--

BECKY

(quickly)
 I practice hoodoo, Sheriff. But I messed up and Mama Cherrie here is trying to help me fix it. Something terrible got let loose and people are gonna die if we don't stop it, including me. And you.

SHERIFF BOB

You? Hoodoo? Now, I didn't just fall off the turnip truck, you know.

(MORE)

SHERIFF BOB (CONT'D)

I know you're covering for Cherrie. You ain't the type to practice black magic. Ain't no way you're in league with the devil. Knowing Cherrie, she probably tricked you into it. You wouldn't even know because--

BECKY

Sheriff, all due respect, but shut the fuck up and let us save lives. Please.

Becky begins to walk toward the sheriff, very slowly.

BECKY (CONT'D)

(lowering her voice as she approaches)

I promise you neither one of us are doing anything illegal or even immoral. All we want to do is stop the thing that's causing this tornado and the quakes.

Becky gets even closer and drops her voice to a sultry tone in an attempt to flirt.

BECKY (CONT'D)

Look, soon as we take care of this, what do you say you and me go out for a drink to celebrate?

SHERIFF BOB

I'd love that darlin', but...

The sheriff is silenced by Becky whacking him on the head with a mason jar, and Bob slumps to the ground.

MAMA CHERRIE

Damn, girl. Didn't know you had it in ya! Knocked him out cold! Ha ha!

Becky grabs the Sheriff's gun and tucks it in her waistband. The rumbling intensifies again, along with the wind.

MAMA CHERRIE (CONT'D)

Let's get out to these woods and stop this. Why don't you hand me that gun?

BECKY

It's cool. I got it.

10 EXT. DOWNTOWN GUNNAWAY - DAY

Sounds of rubble being cleared; screams and crying from those finding their loved ones.

AUGUST

Oh my god! Shoes! Ethan's shoes!

(pause)

Move! Move!

August runs and begins to chuck debris aside, breathing heavily. We hear Andre's footsteps approach him.

AUGUST (CONT'D)

(grunting under the strain
of someone's weight)

I need some help over here! I found
Ethan!

ANDRE

Put him down. Put him down. He
might have a neck injury.

Heels click on the pavement and debris crunches under Rhonda's shoes.

RHONDA

Ethan! Ethan!!

Ethan moans weakly. As Rhonda fusses over him, the rumbling begins here--sinister and angry, but not loud yet.

ETHAN

(weak, crying)

It hurts, mama.

Ethan coughs, spurting blood all over his mother. He **groans** from the pain of the cough.

RHONDA

I'm here baby.

ETHAN

I see dad. Hi, daddy.

RHONDA

What?

(pause)

I think he's hallucinating. Maybe
he hit his head. Or--or my god--
maybe it's internal bleed--

ETHAN

Daddy, what are you doing here?

Everyone is quiet for a beat, knowing what's happening, but not wanting to believe it. In the South, everyone knows seeing a dead loved one means it's your time to go.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

Do I have to?

Neither Rhonda nor August can hold it together any longer. **Rhonda sobs, and August hides his face, muffling his own cries.**

ETHAN (CONT'D)

Mom? Dad says I have to go.

RHONDA

No! No, no, no. Stay with me, baby.
Stay with mommy. We're gonna--

ETHAN

I'll mis--

Ethan coughs again, weakly this time, then appears to pass out. His **breath gets staccato, then one long exhalation.** He's dead. **Rhonda wails** in that way that's unique to mothers who have lost their children.

AUGUST

(yells)

He doesn't have a pulse! I'll start CPR.

Andre pulls Rhonda away and August starts CPR.

AUGUST (CONT'D)

One, two, three, four...

RHONDA'S SHRIEKS MORPH INTO SCREAMS OF ANIMALS IN THE
WOODS AS WE RETURN TO:

11 EXT. WOODS - DAY

The rumbling continues, but there are more sounds of wildlife, and the branches cracking and trees falling are louder in the woods.

MAMA CHERRIE

This is the spot. Help me get these bags open!

BECKY

What do you mean, "this is the spot"?

Heavy branches are snapping and falling in the distance. Smaller branches are flying around them, and a heavy one falls right next to them.

MAMA CHERRIE

Watch for branches!

(under her breath)

You need the little sense you got left.

Becky gets the bag open.

The wind starts to pick up. Leaves swirl around and whip at Mama Cherrie and Becky.

The ground begins to shake again, more violently this time. **The women scream.**

MAMA CHERRIE (CONT'D)

Come on, chile! Sprinkle it in a circle right here. This is where they died.

BECKY

They? You mean my aunt? What happened? Nobody would tell me.

Mama Cherrie begins working, chanting Psalm 23 like it's a spell and not a prayer.

MAMA CHERRIE

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

Becky groans. The animals' shrieking gets louder and more frantic.

MAMA CHERRIE (CONT'D)

(louder)

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

The rumble from the ground becomes a roar. The whispers return, though they aren't yet strong.

MAMA CHERRIE (CONT'D)

Lord have mercy. They're back.

12

EXT. DOWNTOWN GUNNAWAY - DAY

Sounds of debris being cleared, people despairing, and August performing CPR.

AUGUST

Two, three.

Two sets of running footsteps approach.

GEMMA

(yelling from the
distance)

I'm here, Pops. I got it.

August steps back.

Sound of a shirt being cut.

AUGUST

Come on, little man. Stay with us.

(pause)

(yelling as he leaves)

I'll be right back. I can help
Ethan! Gemma, I need you to get a
pulse!

August gets up abruptly, runs into the bar.

GEMMA

One, two, three, four, five.

DANA

Defibrillator ready.

A heart rate monitor beeps on and registers a flat line.

DANA (CONT'D)

Clear!

A shock. Flat line.

GEMMA

IV is in. Giving epi. Dana, grab
some O neg, will ya? We're on our
own. Gotta work with what we got,
partner.

August comes stomping back. Background sounds of continued
CPR from Gemma.

ANDRE

Uh...I dunno if you should be
drinking right now, August.

AUGUST

It's not for me.

ANDRE

Then who?

AUGUST

Ethan.

ANDRE

What? Ethan damn sure shouldn't be drinking alcohol, especially in his state.

AUGUST

Andre. You know me. Can you please trust me?

ANDRE

Alright.

AUGUST

Rhonda, I've got a drink that'll help Ethan.

RHONDA

I don't care what it takes. Please save my baby boy.

AUGUST

I can't promise anything, but I do know it won't make it worse.

August approaches Gemma.

AUGUST (CONT'D)

Gem, I know this sounds crazy, but I have something that I think might help Ethan. Y'all can carry on with your work. I won't be in your way at all.

GEMMA

Do what you gotta do, Pops.

DANA

Clear!

A shock. Flat line.

DANA (CONT'D)

Blood in. Try again?

GEMMA

Yup. Clear!

A shock. Flat line.

RHONDA

Don't stop. Please don't stop.

AUGUST

Come on, Ethan.

GEMMA

Another round of epi in.

(pause)

Shock again.

DANA

Clear!

A shock, a pulse.

DANA (CONT'D)

We got a pulse! Holy shit.

GEMMA

Rhythm's still bad. Let's shock him again.

Another shock. A pulse with a good, steady rhythm.

AUGUST

Thank God. Thank you. Thank you, God.

GEMMA

Let's get him loaded up and over to Doc Torres. It's the best we've got without the hospital. Aunt Rhonda, you can ride in the back if you want.

AUGUST

Rhonda, keep giving him this. Trust me. Do not stop until it's all gone. I'll bring some more as soon as I can.

Rhonda continues sobbing, and muttering Ethan's name. The paramedics slam the doors. The ambulance leaves, fading into the distance.

ANDRE

You gonna tell me why you thought giving an 11-year-old a cocktail would help?

AUGUST

Maybe later. Right now, I need to find my daughter.

August's footsteps retreat.

ANDRE
(under his breath)
What the fuck just happened?

13 EXT. WOODS - DAY

The wind is blowing faster and the rumbling is getting deeper, carving cracks into the ground and toppling trees.

MAMA CHERRIE
It's too late. We need to go. Now.
Run!

The women sprint through the woods for a moment, then a loud and violent rending. Trees snap. There's a crack as a hole opens in the earth.

BECKY
The...the ground! There's a giant
hole...it's opening.

Becky's voice morphs and deepens in to a multitude of voices that erupt from her, raspy, because they are finally able to speak once more:

BECKY (CONT'D)
It's opening.

MAMA CHERRIE
What did you say? Watch out! The
goddamn earth is opening!

Becky lets out a blood curdling scream, then she collapses to the ground.

MAMA CHERRIE (CONT'D)
Sweet Jesus!

Small creatures alert to a predator nearby with insistent chattering.

MAMA CHERRIE (CONT'D)
Becky? Becky!
(sighs, frustrated)
Jesus. This girl done fell down and
knocked herself out, just like in a
damn horror movie.
(starts mumbling)
Now I gotta pick her ass up
(grunting, picking Becky
up)

(MORE)

MAMA CHERRIE (CONT'D)
 and carry her outta here like I
 ain't got nothing better to do than
 tote her around. How the hell did
 she even fall anyway? Ain't
 nothing--
 (a revelation)
 Oh, shit!

Mama Cherrie drops Becky, and none too gently. The wind and rumbling stop suddenly. **Becky moans**. She's confused and **mumbles incoherently**. Mama Cherrie starts walking away.

MAMA CHERRIE (CONT'D)
 Fuck this and fuck you. I ain't
 dyin' out here with some girl who
 ain't got no damn sense, calling up
 a goddamn demon.

As her steps quicken, hundreds of voices whisper all around her. Then, dead silence. Mama Cherrie stops walking.

BECKY
 (deep, raspy voice of
 hundreds of people)
 It's opening.

MAMA CHERRIE
 Lord have mercy! Your eyes!

BECKY
 (voice of multitudes)
 Mercy?

Becky and her passengers laugh as though Mama Cherrie told a joke.

Cherrie runs in earnest and begins to say Psalm 23, this time as a fervent prayer and not a spell.

MAMA CHERRIE
 The Lord is my shepherd; I shall
 not want.

Becky begins to howl, but it's unnatural: hollow, yet comprised of dozens of voices. In the distance, animals join her.

MAMA CHERRIE (CONT'D)
 Yea, though I walk through the
 valley of the shadow of death, I
 will fear no evil, for--

BECKY

(howling stops, then voice
of multitudes laughing,
before speaking)

Fear no evil? Foolish.

The laughing fades. Cherrie keeps running and fumbles getting her phone from her pocket, then dials a number. August picks up.

AUGUST (V.O)

Get to Dr Torres' office now.
Ethan's hurt bad. He's not gonna
make it without your help.

Before she can reply, Becky fires the Sheriff's gun.